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 PEDIGREE OF PATRICIUS SCRIBLERUS:

“He'll speak like an Anthropophaginian unto thee.”

I CAN tell you, Mr. Editor, that it is a matter of very considerable importance to the world, that is, to the readers of your Magazine, to obtain some glimpses, however dim and dark, of the gentlemen writers who contribute to their monthly edification. This, Sir, makes them “clarkly and critical;” enables them to perceive and to pronounce with acumen and emphasis; gives them a knowing look, and a forensic shake of the head, decisive in doubtful cases; throws a halo of second-hand dignity around their persons; and, in certain circles, procures them the privilege of tossing up their noses, with an air of consequence, which proclaims them not of the vulgar. I can easily imagine one of those said gentry seated at his ingle-side, among a few of his admiring friends, good easy souls, with spectacles on nose, your Magazine in hand; and, with a highly self-satisfied countenance, expatiating on the merits of the different articles, thus. “I know the writer of this right well—a goodnatured, honest fellow—loves his friend and pitcher—laughs care out of countenance, and makes it a point to be fat—meet him now and then at the festive board—he trolls a merry catch, but there’s no end to him—nimble as quicksilver though—a sharp shot at an ode, and a deep dab at an epigram—can jerk you off any thing in prose or verse, in the quaffing of a bumper.” Or, as the case may be: “the author of this, now, is a very odd fish—looks like a fool, but is no such thing—grave to be sure, but deep, gentlemen, deep as a draw-well—speaks little, but thinks like a philosopher—impossible to fathom him—no coming and going in him, as they say; but profound, very profound, I assure you; and I think I should know a thing or two.” Thus does he chuckle over the lucubrations of your correspondents, to the great gratification of his audience, and to the very visible delight of his own inner man: making others believe, and almost persuading himself, that he possesses “secrets worth knowing.” Such persons are by no means useless in society, nor are they very disagreeable to us heroes of the quill: for I suppose, Sir, you know very well that it is no unpleasant thing to be honourably distinguished in the crowd, (*monstrari digito*), to meet the gaze of admiration, and the gape of reverence; and to read, in the staring physiognomy of a plebeian, his surprise at seeing an *author*. These, with some other considerations equally powerful, induce me to unveil myself a little more to you and your readers, though you have al-

ready surmised something about my family—truly wonderful, did I not conclude that you possess, in no trifling degree, the enviable faculty of *second sight*.

Know, then, at once, that I am *descended*, most assuredly, from the renowned MARTINUS SCRIBLERUS, of immortal memory!!—There, now, the murder's out; and I see you before me as plain as a pike-staff: I see the workings and contortions of your countenance, and the rolling and expansion of your eyes: I see you stare and goggle on the paper, like Macbeth on Banquo's ghost, or the Duke of Limbo on Sir Thomas Erpingham:

The man awoke, and goggled on his master;
And found his master goggling upon him.

The buccinatory muscles of your face are in full play; you puff up your cheeks, stretch your nostrils wide, hold hard your breath; till, at length, with a belch like that of an hippopotamus, you bolt out, Prodigious!!—Having digested this piece of intelligence as well as you may, you are, no doubt, now gravely settling yourself to consider the affair, and to ponder over the whys, hows, wherefores, and possibilities of the case. “Go to, go to, cudgel your brains no longer—your dull ass won't mend with beating.” Your curiosity is, no doubt, excited;—but am I bound to gratify it? You feel a yearning and a longing to know all about and about it; but you are completely in my power, and I might drop my pen, and shut my mouth on the subject, and leave you to your ignorance and your second-sight for ever. But I scorn such conduct: I disdain to take advantage of my vantage ground; nor am I the man to deal out my confidence as an apothecary sells his drugs, in grains and scruples—so you shall have it without a grain of scruple at all.

You and your learned readers are well acquainted with the instructive Memoirs of my grandfather, Martinus Scriblerus, commonly called *the Great*. But as the public have thus the prospect of being enlightened by one who is thoroughly imbued with the genius of the Scribleri family, I have no doubt these Memoirs will now be perused by all, to observe how that hereditary genius was formed; and they will learn with gratitude, how much they owe to the affectionate assiduity of his worthy father, (my great grandfather) Cornelius Scriblerus—who has thus become the benefactor of the present generation. The Memoirs, indeed, deserve the attention of all who are interested in training the young mind, as furnishing an example of the absolute perfectibility of human nature, under proper culture.

Cornelius, you know, introduced many improvements into the system of education, which have been borrowed, without

acknowledging them, by our great modern theorists. By a peculiar refinement, which I am surprised has been so often overlooked, the education of Martinus commenced before his birth. Even then, his soul was trained to harmony, and his incipient faculties expanded "to the sound of dulcet symphonies and voices sweet." His cradle, like that of Hercules, was a shield, whose antique beauties rendered it as much an object of competition among the Literati of Europe, as the shield of Achilles was among the Greeks. He was suckled and fed after the manner of the ancients. The very first language he learned was Greek, of which he became master at eight years of age; and which he acquired by eating gingerbread cakes stamped with the letters of the alphabet. He studied mathematics, by drawing figures on his bread and butter. His toys were strictly classical and scientific: marbles taught him percussion, and the laws of motion; nut-crackers, the use of the lever; swinging on the ends of a board, the balance; whirligigs, the axis and peritrochium; bird-cages, the pulley; and tops, the centrifugal motion. Logic and metaphysics he easily acquired under the care of his worthy father, who illustrated the subtlest principles by the most appropriate sensible images, of which one example may suffice. The coachman, one day, describing what he had seen in the bear-garden, said he had seen two men fight a prize: one was a fair man, a sergeant in the Guards; the other, black, a butcher: the sergeant had red breeches; the butcher, blue: they fought upon a stage, about 4 o'clock, and the sergeant wounded the butcher in the leg. "Mark," quoth Cornelius, "how the fellow runs the Categories. Men, *substantia*; two, *quantitas*; fair and black, *qualitas*; sergeant and butcher, *relatio*; wounded the other, *actio et passio*; fighting, *situs*; stage, *ubi*; 2 o'clock, *quando*; blue and red breeches, *habitus*." By such an original path, did the great Martinus travel over the whole circle of the sciences, in each of which he made the profoundest discoveries; and betook himself, at last, to the medical profession, in which his success was astonishing; inventing many diseases that were never heard of before; and curing others, both of body and mind, which had formerly been beyond the reach of human skill. He was, also, as might be expected, a great traveller, and a great writer; and was prepared for enlightening the English nation, and through them the whole world, by his most diversified lucubrations, when he was, by his misfortunes, obliged to leave England so suddenly, in the reign of Queen Anne, that he cast many of his valuable MSS. "into a bog-house, near St. James's."

You may remember, that he had been pursued "through

almost every part of the terraqueous globe," by a jealous-pated Spanish husband, merely because he had indulged a philosophical curiosity, which awoke the most unreasonable suspicions in an ignorant mind. Now, Sir, IRELAND being part of the said terraqueous globe, is it not possible, nay, is it not probable, (*a priori*,) that he took refuge there for a time? The fact is, (*a posteriori*,) that he did so; and thereby hangs a tale. I am so particular in my reasonings, because you and some others are likely to doubt the fact. I say then, (for the blood of the Scribleri rises within me at the doubt,) it is supported not only by the argument *a posteriori* and *a priori*, but by the argument inductive and analogical, presumptive and probable; nay, by the *argumentum ad absurdum*—the *argumentum ad hominem*—the *argumentum ad passiones*;—nay, by the negative pregnant. But, to put the matter beyond all doubt, you find it on record, that Martinus, like his father, "had a most superstitious veneration for the ancients." Now, Sir, where could he find a more ancient nation than in Ireland? Is it not thus written? "In the year of the world, 1956, Partholan, the son of Seara, the son of Sru, the son of Easru, son of Framant, son to Fathochda, the son of Magog, son to Japhet, the son of Noah, landed in Ireland, accompanied by his wife Ealga, or Ealgnait, his three sons, Rughruidhe, Slainge, and Laighline, with their wives and 1000 soldiers. The book of Invasions, from which this relation is taken, fixes the time of his landing, to be 278 years after the flood: but Mr. O'Flaherty makes it 35 years later: differences, however, of little consequence in transactions so remote."*—*O'Halloran's Hist. of Ireland*, p. 2.

In the second place, my ancestor was passionately attached to learning, especially ancient and rare learning; and to all manner of learned men. Now, where could we find so learned a people, or such variety of profound erudition, as in the kingdom, which, by universal consent, acquired the title of *Insula Doctorum*?" Is it not also written? "The nation whose history I have the honour of presenting to the public, have been, from the most remote antiquity, *a polished people*; and with propriety, may be called, *The Fathers of Letters*." "To pass by the *sunshine* which our history throws on that of the early Greeks, and other neighbouring nations; were we to consider that it is the *only key* to the Greek and Roman

* My German ancestors are proud of their antiquity; but that pride lately met with dreadful mortification. "Soon after the late war in Germany, the Prince of Saxe Hilburghausen, one day, in a large circle, descanting on the high antiquity of his house,—General O'Donnel, (descended from Niall, the Grand Monarch of Ireland, in the fourth century,) fatigued with his vanity, coolly replied, 'Mon. Prince, vous etiez bien heureux d'avoir etre né en Allemagne—si vous etiez chez moi, a peine auriez vous le droit de bourgeois.'"—*Ibid. Prel. Dis.* 17.

accounts of the religion, laws, and customs of the ancient Celtæ, that alone should entitle it to the particular attention of the literati of Europe.”—*Ibid. Introduction*. Nor are the stores of ancient learning lost or inaccessible. St. Patrick, we know, desired Leogaire, the monarch, “to convene a committee for revising the national records; which met at Teamore, and consisted of three kings, three prelates, and three senachaide. The records thus purified and authenticated were transcribed into the *Seanachas More* (the great book of antiquity). Of this venerable volume, several inestimable fragments are to be found in public libraries, and in the hands of the curious. Amongst these are *Leabhar-Ardamatha*, *Psaltair Chaisil*, *Leabhar Dubh Mholaise*, and *Leabhar na Huaidho-hangabthala*,”* *cum multis aliis*—a precious collection for my grandfather, over which he pored many a day, and many a night.—But, to put the matter beyond a doubt, I have the *argumentum ad hominem* in store. You know, my grandfather, though born in London, was of German parentage; and it is expressly recorded, that “his mother’s ancestors had been professors of physic, astronomy, or chemistry, in the German universities, from generation to generation.” Now, Sir, it is certain that when universities began, they were all supplied from Ireland, the *Insula Doctorum*; and thus “all Europe proclaimed the erudition and piety of her sons.”—From some of the invincible Doctors of Ireland, then, the Scribleri are undoubtedly descended; and it is not strange, that the affectionate heart of my grandfather should have prompted him to visit the land of his fathers. These cogent arguments are all strengthened by the well-known fact, that, “when a lettered man of Britain or of the Continent was for any time absent, it became a proverb,—“*Amandatus est ad disciplinam in Hiberniâ!*”—*O’Halloran’s Prel. Disc.*

Having thus supported my own veracity, by proving the fact of my grandfather’s residence in Ireland, I shall give you a glimpse of his history while there, as far as the extreme delicacy of some occurrences admits.

Can you tell me, Sir, if there is, or if there ever was a book in the world, entitled “*Fatal Curiosity?*” If there is not, there ought to be; and by the blessing, there *will* be such a book, set forth for the good of whom it may concern, abounding with anecdotes and illustrations, from the life and adventures of my great progenitor—but this *en passant*. During the time Martinus remained in this country incog, his foreign air, majestic appearance, and solitary rambles, attracted the notice, and raised the *curiosity* of a young lady of high rank; but brought up in romantic solitude, and much given to the

* Walker’s Irish Bards, p. 49.

perusal of novels. She contrived to cross him frequently in his lonely walks of meditation; and some mysterious hints that he heard concerning her, and her residence, excited his *curiosity* (which you know was always on the alert), and slowly brought about an acquaintance, that gradually ripened into intimacy; in the progress of which, this great man suffered himself to be led into awkward circumstances. Why need I multiply words? *Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit.* It is a delicate matter; being, like the Spanish one, an affair in high life; and, as an honourable family is concerned, silence is best.—With respect to myself, however, I beg leave to inform you, in the most solemn manner, that, notwithstanding the sneers of wittings about the bend sinister on my scutcheon, I am as legitimate as Charles X. or Ferdinand the Beloved.

How long my worthy grandfather remained in Ireland, I have not been able exactly to ascertain. His thirst for knowledge, and erratic disposition, did not allow him permanently to domiciliate himself in any one place. The tradition in my family is, that he regularly visited this land, to which he had so many attachments, after finishing his different excursions in quest of the curiosities of nature and art. His connexion with it has been productive of many blessings, for which, I am afraid, the present generation are not sufficiently grateful either to him or his family; for I must claim them as the gifts of the whole family, to which both my father and myself have contributed. The diffusion of knowledge has always been our great object; and, to a skilful eye, Ireland presents many memorials of our benevolent labours—particularly that wise system of education which has so generally prevailed, even among the lower orders; which can be traced as far back as the days of my grandfather, and which bears so many marks of his genius. You will at once recollect the general diffusion of the *Latin* tongue, the favourite of our family, which many of our peasantry can speak better than English.—But I need not specify particulars. You have the opinion of my friend Captain Rock himself concerning the excellence and originality of the general system of education. “It is a great mistake,” he justly observes, “to say that the Irish are uneducated. There is no doubt that the faculty of reading and writing is quite as much diffused among the Irish as among the English peasantry. The difference is not in the *quantity*, but the *quality* of our education.” The quality speaks for itself. “Our education,” he adds, “was imbibed in one of those ancient seminaries, which, like the academies of the ancients, are held in the open air, and which, from the sheltered situation they occupy, are called hedge schools.

That particular hedge school which had the honour of educating me, deserves rather perhaps to be called a *university*; as the little students, having first received their rudiments in the ditch, were from thence promoted in due time to *graduate* in the hedge.* Do you not here see the love of the antique, which is so characteristic of our family? But look into the course of studies pursued in these ancient seminaries or universities, and say whether it does not indicate the same spirit. "We were driven," says Captain Rock, "to select a course of study for ourselves; and the line of reading, usually adopted, is as follows." He then presents a list which corresponds remarkably to what had formerly been given by Wakefield and others, of cottage classics; amongst which are, History of the Seven Champions of Christendom—Montelin, Knight of the Oracle—Parismus and Parismenes—Irish Rogues and Rapparees—History of the most celebrated Pirates—Fair Rosamond and Jane Shore—Donna Rozina (of Spain)—*Quid's Art of Love!*—History of Witches and Apparitions—The Devil and Dr. Faustus (truly German, and quite to the taste of my family). Capt. Rock mentions the following on theology, as recent additions, but in the same style:—Pastorini's Prophecies, and the Miracles of Hohenlohe. But the genius of my family appears in other circles, and in higher productions. You know my grandfather's celebrated work on the BATHOS; and have you never observed how carefully it has been studied and imitated among some who have obtained a high name, without seeming to know to whose instructions and example they are indebted for it? How often has the great principle inculcated by him been adopted—"to say nothing in the usual way, but (if possible) in the direct contrary?" How frequently do we meet with his figures, without any acknowledgement—"the variegating, confounding, or reversing tropes—the magnifying and the diminishing"—"the periphrasis or circumbendibus—the macrology or pleonasm—or a superfluity of words, and vacuity of sense, which are just the same things;" and, above all, "the cumbrous and the buskin style, which moves heavily under a load of metaphors, and draws after it a long train of words." How many descriptions have been formed according to his famous receipt *for a tempest*? "Take Eurus, Zephyr, Auster, and Boreas, and cast them together; add to these, of rain, lightning, and thunder (the loudest you can) *quantum sufficit*; mix your clouds and billows well together, till they foam; and thicken your description, here and there, with a quicksand."—Be assured, Sir, wherever you find these beauties of composition, you trace the footsteps of my ancestors, and behold the fruits of their labours.

An old motheaten desk, containing some things of rather a curious description, together with the *cacoethes scribendi*, constitute the whole stock of my hereditary goods and chattels. Ah! Mr. Editor, when I look at this desk how I rejoice and mourn! It is the pride of my family, and might have made their fortune, had they not partaken too much of the thoughtlessness and improvidence of their country, which have grown upon them with the decline of their property. Oh, Sir, what did not that desk once contain! All my grandfather's MSS. were not thrown into the bog-house near St. James's. Some of them are still in that very desk, but others——! Yet why need I repine? It has always been the fate of my family to be pillaged by their neighbours.—You know it was my grandfather's lot: and his descendants have also fallen on evil times. How many have, by various arts, borrowed or pilfered from that desk. I would not altogether acquit Captain Rock himself. But your Magazine-makers—oh, they are wily thieves!—Had we only met with Irish rogues and rapparees, my patriotism would have borne all meekly. But to think of rogues in *other* countries, especially in the neighbourhood, with *canny* hands and wily tongues. A poor Irishman is no match for them. That Christopher North—he knows where he got many things that he puffs off. Lieutenant O'Dogherty has been too often in our family, in their unguarded moments. But my indignation rises most at the *Great Unknown!* I know him—and the world shall yet know him! But I must be cool and resigned. You see, Sir, my family have, of late, been far from provident and considerate. My father was not very like the great founder of the family in his appearance, temper, or habits. The German blood was enlivened by the Irish spirit. He was a light, active, well-made, impetuous little man; bouncing about like a squib or a cracker (*genus irritabile vatum*,) but extremely negligent, and [thoughtless about worldly concerns. He was a good, easy soul; kept no records of any transactions—and I was, in my youth, as gay as the lark, and never thought of the past or the future. For that reason, I was for a long time ignorant of many circumstances about myself; and it was but lately that I had an opportunity of making some important discoveries.

I find, among other musty matters in the old desk above-mentioned, the following document, which will set his character in a clearer point of view than any description of mine can possibly do; merely premising, that the 17th of March appeared to him a day of vast importance, and indeed he always contrived to hold it in due veneration.

“ March, 18th.—Yesterday morning, was puzzled to pronounce the day lucky or unlucky, for it was the anniversary of my marriage, and

the birth of my youngest son, (myself) who in consequence was named Patricius.—Wished to celebrate both events, as well as to honour the memory of our patron Saint, but had not the means. Wife sitting before a grate, almost unconscious of a fire, with four children playing round her merry as crickets. Heart sickened at the sight—pretended illness, and having neither money nor credit went to bed: got angry with wife for looking cheerfully on the little ones, and smiling at their merriment; but only turned myself round, and gave a groan. Five o'clock.—Wife brought to my bed side a meagre fowl; wouldn't taste a bit, had no appetite, for, poor souls, 'twas all they had among them. About seven, landlady's little boy knocked at the door; bade him enter, which he did with a letter; not an inch of candle in the house, borrowed one from landlady. N.B.—A poor, skinny, paste-board-faced old widow. Opened letter, and out dropt a £5 Bank of Ireland note; read, in a hurried manner, 'Mr. ——— compliments, last article on Ways and Means excellent; begs acceptance—enclosed —drown shamrock, &c. &c.'—Jumped out of bed, and was in the act of running down stairs at fresco, but prevented by wife. N.B.—Wives prevent men from doing foolish things oftener than they get credit for. Hurried on my habiliments, called little boy, (an obliging lad, good to him when I can afford it), rushed across the street, and darted into P——'s 'wholesale and retail Wine, Spirit and Grocery Stores;' hate that fellow; a belly like a butt, rosy gills, purple cheeks, fiery nose and splendidly carbuncled—sign he's not fed on deaf nuts—sign also he's no author—looked at me and the bank note as if he suspected I had purloined, or forged it—bought 1 lb. of tea, 3 ditto sugar, for wife; 1 dozen red herrings, two-pence worth blackguard, and two bottles usquebaugh; dived into the butcher's and got 4 lbs. mutton chops; ducked into baker's and bought a huge loaf; loaded little boy and marched home with giant strides.—Requested wife to get dinner, tea, and supper all at once—poor soul thought me crazy—made a glorious meal—crammed the little devils till they could scarcely sit, and made them drink till they could scarcely stand.—Happy as the Autocrat of Russia, and wife smiling like a Czarina to see me so.—Asked for a song—sweet pipe, but weak—burst into tears in the middle of it, at some odd recollection or other, so I roared out the 'Sprig of Shilela,' with great vociferation, and took down an old fiddle with three strings, and scraped away at 'Patrick's day in the morning,' with great perseverance.—Sent in for old landlady and boy—made them taste our cheer—paid her a fortnight's rent in advance, and every soul of us on our marrow bones drank "long life to Mr. ——— and success to periodicals."—Went to bed with my 'soul wrapt up in elysium,' and pronounced it a lucky day."

Two things may be inferred from the above—the first is, that my father must have been a man of sanguine temperament, and like all such, subject to great inequality of spirits; and the second is, that he was a writer for Periodicals—and how could he be more usefully employed, or in a way more productive of pleasure to his readers? Somebody prayed for

the privilege of lounging eternally on a sofa, and reading novels; and I wish for no higher earthly gratification than to be reclining on such a seat, in the heat of a summer's day, or by a winter night's blazing fire, reading periodicals. In whatever shape they come, under whatever colour they appear, I clutch them with eagerness, gloat over their pages with insatiable cupidity, and find my "appetite grows by what it feeds on."—But I wander from the point; and, indeed, I find I have been rather discursive. There is no remedy now; for I have already occupied your time and attention sufficiently. I should have said more about the great man; but, as I have already hinted, the subject requires to be touched with a delicate hand; and I hope that my readers will enter into my feelings in the present case, and be perfectly satisfied. Besides, it might be attributed to vanity,—a thing which, in common with every man of merit, I wish to avoid. I have never arrayed myself in the gorgeous trappings of ancestry, nor am I guilty of the childish folly of family pride; though, in my case, it might be excused; and the historical sketch I have now given of my parentage, is merely to gratify some worthy men, who are daily and hourly on the fidgets to know something of literary characters; but whose modesty and diffidence, or want of your tact and discernment, leave them in doubts and difficulties.

P. SCRIBLERUS.

NOTICES OF THE EARLY LIFE OF JAMES HOGG;

WITH REMARKS ON "QUEEN HYNDE," HIS LAST POEM.

IN Scotland, almost all men are readers; many are qualified to form a correct opinion of what they read, and not a few to interest the reading classes by their own writings. For the last thirty years, there has existed in that country, a literary ardour, that has produced a large portion of excellence, with not a little absurdity. The *cacoethes scribendi* has been an epidemic that has seized indiscriminately all ranks and descriptions of men; and almost every village has boasted its uneducated bard.—The extraordinary success of Burns led to this order of things. The sun of his genius drew into existence hosts of imitators, as the summers of Egypt produce the frogs on the banks of the Nile; but while it gave birth to a numerous race of pestilent croakers, it also called forth from obscurity some men of eminent endowments. Once or twice in a century, men arise to give character to an age, and to direct its talent into the channel in which their own has flow-